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Pope Leo



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As conflict in the Middle East escalated with Israeli airstrikes on nuclear sites in Iran and retaliatory drone attacks on Israel, Pope Leo XIV appealed for restraint and renewed the church's calls for nuclear disarmament and peaceful dialogue.

Speaking to pilgrims at the end of a special Jubilee audience June 14, the pope expressed deep concern over the "seriously deteriorating" situation in the Middle East, warning of the consequences of further escalation. "I want to strongly renew an appeal to responsibility and reason," he said.

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The pope emphasized that the pursuit of a safer world "free from the nuclear threat" must be rooted in "respectful encounter and sincere dialogue," laying the foundations for lasting peace "based on justice, fraternity, and the common good."

"No one should ever threaten the existence of another," he said. "It is the duty of all nations to support the cause of peace, taking paths of reconciliation and promoting solutions that ensure security and dignity for all."

The pope's comments came a day after Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, warned of stronger responses to the air strikes, fueling fears of wider conflict.